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About the Artists

Akatsuka Fujio (1935-2008) is considered the master of gag manga and is renowned for his groundbreaking contributions to the field. Akatsuka began his career as an illustrator for rental manga (kashihon), developing a talent for crafting gags that resonated with everyday life. His breakthrough came with *Osomatsu-kun* (1956), a manga featuring sextuplet brothers, whose absurd scenarios and anarchic humor became a cultural touchstone. One of his representing works *Genius Bakabon* (*Tensai Bakabon*, 1967) is a story of an eccentric father and his family that cemented his gag master reputation. His characters exist in exaggerated, often nonsensical worlds, clearly reflecting his interest in manzai (comedy duos involving wordplay and exaggerated misunderstandings) and slapstick. Akko-chan's Secret (Himitsu no Akko-chan, 1962), was one of Japan's earliest magical girl manga. Those titles were released as anime and still resonate today with audiences of all ages fifty years on.

Titles included: *Fujio Productions at work*, *Fujio Production's Studio: No Business like Gag Business* (Kobunsha), *Edo As It Was!!: Osomatsu-kun, Iyami as Mito Kōmon* (Shogakukan), *Insomnia - Dreamland: Tensai Bakabon* (Kodansha), *Psychedelic Beach, Gag + Gag: Moretsu Ataro – Extra* (Shogakukan)

Araki Hirohiko (b. 1960), who has been drawing *JoJo's Bizarre Adventure* in multiple iterations since 1986, has sold more than 120 million copies of JoJo's voguish artistic designs and visually compelling artworks. JoJo's narrative shows that though beauty may be perceived from the outside, it shines from within if one has a solid self-belief system. Araki's artistic style is characterized by highly stylized and dynamic poses that are instantly recognizable and the use of "stands," or superpowered alter egos. Araki's art celebrates the "body beautiful" (blending of body and spirit) concept taken from classical Greek and later Western art, notably the works of Michelangelo Buonarroti and other Renaissance artists which he couples with compelling storylines. This section of the exhibition focuses on Araki as a manga artist, his creation process and the choices he makes with his work. All of his work on display is hand drawn. Twelve life-sized paintings will be shown for the first time outside of Japan with a film on how he created the drawings of his main characters.

Titles included: *JoJo's Bizarre Adventure* (1-9) and *Rohan at the Louvres* (Shueisha), *There is always a Traitor.*

Chiba Tetsuya (b.1939) is the undisputed master of story manga in Japan. Widely recognized for being one of the most important contributors to the rise of sports manga, he has also worked in other genres including compelling shōjo (girls') manga at an earlier stage of his career. His passion for sports is personal and reflected in his range of sports manga, such as his golf manga *Stay Fine (Ashita tenki ni nare*, 1981-1991). One of his most popular titles that captured the zeitgeist of the period is *Ashita no Joe: Fighting for Tomorrow* (1968-1973), a story of a

youth who is homeless, lands in prison, and finds his salvation through boxing. The manga was a collaboration; Takamori Asao wrote the script and Chiba illustrated the manga. They managed to capture the aspirations and struggles of Japan's working class in the early postwar period. At the age of 86, Chiba still teaches manga and continues to draw regularly with a serialized full color manga *A Diary of a Quiet Life*, an autobiography of his life with manga. In 2024 he was awarded the Order of Culture, the first manga artist to receive this honor which was presented to Chiba by the Emperor of Japan.

Titles included: *Ashita no Joe: Fighting for Tomorrow*, *Stay Fine!* (Kodansha, the former written by Takamori Asao), *A Diary of a Quiet Life* (Shogakukan).

Oda Eiichiro's (b. 1975) masterwork *ONE PIECE* is described by both critics and readers as one of the most important manga of all time in terms of its sheer narrative power, worldview, artistry, and humor. Since its serialization in Shueisha's *Weekly Shonen Jump* magazine began in July 1997, 110 printed volumes have been published as of January 2025, with a total worldwide circulation of more than 510 million copies (not including digital versions). The story has captured the zeitgeist of the period with the youth Monkey D. Luffy setting out as a pirate against all the odds to find the mythical treasure 'ONE PIECE' and discovering true friendship and adventure along the way. This section of the exhibition demonstrates the various artistic techniques that Oda uses to masterfully capture the imaginations of millions of shônen manga readers (targeting for boys ages 11-18). Oda draws his own manga and colors the drawings himself. This section gives a rare chance to view the actual genga drawings, lending new insight into his published manga.

Titles included: ONE PIECE (Shueisha).

Tagame Gengoroh (b. 1964) is a renowned manga artist and prominent in the field of gay erotic art. His manga focuses on forms of love between men, while touching on identity, prejudice and the potential hardships experienced when coming out as gay. Recently, he shifted hearts, minds, and attitudes in Japan with the powerful international award-winning manga *My Brother's Husband* which was made into a live-action TV drama. This title explored the concept of family, preconceptions, acceptance, and gay issues in a suburban Japanese community. His manga *Our Colors* highlights multiple challenges of 'coming out', while *Fish and Water* takes us inside a budding romantic relationship between two men cemented through the act of cooking and eating. This section of the exhibition focuses on how Tagame uses manga as a form of activism and celebration of individual identity and preference. His manga art is life-affirming and delivered completely digitally.

Titles included: *My Brother's Husband, Our Colors, Fish and Water* (Futabasha), and original illustrations.

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Tanaami Keiichi (b. 1936-2024) was a renowned Japanese artist whose multifaceted career spans graphic design, fine art, animation, and illustration. As a leading figure in Japan's postwar underground art scene, Tanaami drew from his experiences during World War II, merging his personal memories with American-style pop culture. In 1966, he published *A Portrait of Tanaami Keiichi* which heralded his rather radical idea that printed materials are in fact all original works and not reproductions. His work reflects themes of consumerism, eroticism, and trauma, bridging traditional Japanese motifs and contemporary visual culture. In 2021, Shueisha Manga-Art Heritage commissioned Tanaami to create a series of gravure prints to mark the end of that printing method for the publishing industry in Japan. Tanaami was given the permission to use Akatsuka Fujio's iconic characters and distinctive onomatopoetic fonts in any way he wished. These collaborative gravure prints were published in 2023. Tanaami was 86 and in characteristic fashion he expanded on his heartfelt tribute to Akatsuka in a variety of works that went beyond print, including a teahouse installation and kimono which he continued to add to until his passing at the age of 88.

Tanaami x Akatsuka artwork is displayed in the Shueisha Manga-Art Heritage section of the exhibition.

Taniguchi Jiro (1947–2017) created artwork that explores the intersection of human emotion and the natural world. Raised in Tottori, Japan, Taniguchi developed an early fascination with both European and Japanese artistic traditions. His distinctive style combines delicate line work with a cinematic approach to storytelling. Taniguchi's works frequently delve into themes of memory, nostalgia, and the relationship between humanity and the environment, as seen in his critically acclaimed *A Distant Neighborhood.* He also created science fiction works such as *Ice Age Chronicle of the Earth* (*Chikyū hyōkai jiki*, 1987-91), taking us into the future of a destroyed earth that is regenerating and taking on a life of its own. The works on display in this section are all hand-drawn and colored by Taniguchi and his assistants.

Titles included: *Ice Age Chronicles* and *Solitary Gourmet* (Fusosha, the later written by Qusumi Masayuki), *A Distant Neighborhood* (Shogakukan), *Furari* (Kodansha), and *Venice* (Louis Vuitton).

Takahashi Rumiko (b. 1957), a national treasure in Japan, stands as one of the most celebrated and influential manga artists in Japanese history. She has earned acclaim not only for her many contributions to the medium, but also for her unique ability to blend humor, romance, and fantasy into captivating narratives constantly pushing the boundaries of manga. She published her first manga when she was 20 years old. Multiple hits followed with *Ranma ½,* which was created between 1987 and 1996 and challenged traditional gender norms. The manga introduced a global audience to Japanese humor and comical martial arts. She broke gender barriers in a male-dominated industry, selling over 230 million copies of her manga. She continues to draw compelling manga with her latest hit *MAO* (2019-), which features

supernatural and historical themes twined with a search for identity and romance. In this section of the exhibition, visitors learn how to understand manga and its composition. Takahashi's manga reveals her interest in the supernatural and shows readers how manga can transport us to parallel realities and open portals. All the drawings and color illustrations are hand drawn by Takahashi, supported by her assistants.

Titles included: *MAO*, *Mermaid Saga*, *Inuyasha*, *Rin-ne* and *Ranma ½* (Shogakukan).

Yamashita Kazumi (b. 1959) started drawing manga professionally in the 1970s. She has won multiple awards, including the 25th Tezuka Cultural Prize for Land in 2021, for her delicate yet instantly recognizable line work and her character development that graphically captures the interior worlds and perceptions of the protagonists in her manga. Yamashita piercingly explores societal pressures, existential questions, and the intricacies of interpersonal relationships, sibling rivalry and belief systems, while also drawing manga on the everyday world around her. Her manga successfully blurs the traditional boundaries between genres making her a unique figure in the manga world. She recently embarked on an innovative crowdsource-funded manga to successfully protect local cultural heritage in her neighborhood. Her influence extends beyond the realm of manga and shines as an example of how the medium can address complex philosophical and societal issues. In this section of the exhibition, visitors can see both hand drawn and digitally drawn genga. The ability of manga to act as a catalyst for change is readily apparent in Yamashita's themes, as well as her call to action to help create the environment in which we wish to live.

Titles included: *Land* and *The Wonder Boy* (Kodansha), *Suki desu!, Zoku Suki desu!* and *To Live in the Oldest Western-style House in Setagaya* (Shueisha).

Yamazaki Mari (b. 1967) is not only an award-winning mangaka, but also a portrait painter, painting conservator, writer, and illustrator. Born in Tokyo, she spent more than half of her life abroad in places such as Italy, Syria, Portugal, Brazil and the United States. Yamazaki excels at transforming Western historical narratives and biographies into compelling manga. She can masterfully capture her subjects' inner emotional landscapes and transfer them into a visual narrative format. By tracing both real and imaginary individuals throughout history, Yamazaki's work uncovers life lessons about humanity that transcend time and place. Beyond manga, Yamazaki has contributed to adaptations of her works, including screenplays and collaborative projects with filmmakers and writers, further broadening her artistic reach. Her 2021 portrait of the musician Yamashita Tatsurô, was featured on the album cover SOFTLY, highlighting the often-present synergies of music, the visual arts and manga in Japan. In this section visitors learn how Yamazaki delivers important life lessons through gags and humor, transcending cultural boundaries and demonstrating that manga can be an effective international language. Her manga includes a mixture of hand-drawn and digital examples.

Titles included: *Plinius* (with Torii Miki, Shinchosha), *Thermae Romae* (Kadokawa), *Thermae Romae Redux* (Shueisha), *Steve Jobs* (Kodansha), and *Museum of Palmyra*.

Yoshinaga Fumi (b. 1971) is a gifted mangaka who is celebrated for her diverse storytelling and superior line drawing. With no interest in heteronormative story lines, she subverts viewers' conceptions of love, attraction and power, giving fresh insights into daily life through her compelling characters. In *What did you Eat Yesterday*? she depicts the realities and challenges in Japan for a middle-aged gay couple through the act of cooking and dining, with recipes at the end of each chapter. In *Ôoku the Inner Chambers*, Yoshinaga re-imagines the Edo period as ruled by women instead of men. She was awarded the 13th Osamu Tezuka Cultural prize for this title in 2009. Both titles have been made into live-action dramas. Her subject range is prolific and always insightful; in *Flowers of Life* one of her earlier works, she dives into the world of self-published manga stories (*dôjinshi*) and In her recent work *Tamaki & Amane* which won the Japanese *This Manga is Amazing 2025* award for female mangaka*,* she examines the twists of enduring love between two souls through a series of very different lifetimes. She is currently working on a new manga titled *Talent*. This section of the exhibition focuses on the narrative unfolding of Yoshinaga's stories and her visual process.

Titles included: *What did you Eat Yesterday*? (Kodansha), *Ôoku, the Inner Chambers* and *Flowers of Life* (Hakusensha*)*, *Tamaki & Amane (*Shueisha*)*.